



**Dr Rafael Mitchell**  
**PGCE, MA, PhD**

Lecturer in Education

**Area of research**

Lecturer in Comparative and International Education

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**Summary**

**Background**

I have worked in education since 2002, largely in sub-Saharan Africa and other low-resource contexts. Before joining Bristol I worked at the University of Cambridge, where I helped establish the [African Education Research Database \(AERD\)](#) which is an online catalogue of research by African-based academics.

I have a broad interest in schooling in Africa, and particularly in pedagogy and leadership for disadvantaged learners. My [PhD research](#) was an ethnographic study of the agendas, participation and influence of different stakeholder groups at a government primary school in Tigray, Ethiopia.

**Supervision**

I am interested in supervising masters and PhD projects on education in Africa or elsewhere, with a particular focus on:

Educational leadership – school-level participation in evaluation and decision-making processes, including through student voice

School and classroom-level approaches to promoting access, learning for disadvantaged groups

Policies relating to teachers and teaching in non-Western contexts

Ethnographic approaches to research in educational settings

**Biography**

I am a lecturer in Comparative and International Education with a special focus on education in Africa. I previously worked at the University of Cambridge where I co-founded the [African Education Research Database](#). I serve on the leadership team for the international GCRF research programme [Transforming Education for Sustainable Futures](#), which is supporting up to 80 Southern-led projects in Rwanda, Somalia/Somaliland, South Africa and India.

My research and teaching address global inequalities in knowledge production in education, and processes of schooling and school improvement, with respect to inclusive pedagogies, curricula and leadership. I welcome doctoral supervision and research collaborations in these areas.

**Keywords**

- comparative and international education

- educational leadership
- education in Africa
- Ethiopia
- international research collaboration
- school improvement
- student voice
- sub-Saharan Africa

## Memberships

### Organisations

[School of Education](#)

[British Association of International and Comparative Education](#)

[Comparative and International Education Society \(US\)](#)

## Recent publications

- Mitchell, R, 2019, '[How accessible are journal articles on education written by sub-Saharan African-based researchers?](#)'. *Development and Change*.
- Mitchell, R, 2019, '[Student organisation as a facet of teaching quality in sub-Saharan Africa: evidence to inform the World Bank's Teach observation instrument](#)'.
- Sabates, R, Zhao, VY, Mitchell, R & Ilie, S, 2019, '[Understanding the Non-market Social Benefits of Higher Education in Ethiopia: An Empirical and Contextual Analysis using Young Lives](#)'. *Journal of Education Finance*.
- Mitchell, R, 2019, '[Radical student participation: lessons from an urban government primary school in Tigray, Ethiopia](#)'. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, vol 49., pp. 98-114
- Fox, A & Mitchell, R, 2019, '[Ethical learning from an educational ethnography: the application of an ethical framework in doctoral supervision](#)'. in: *Implementing Ethics in Educational Ethnography: Regulation and Practice, 1st Edition*. Routledge, pp. 110
- Rose, P, Downing, P, Asare, S & Mitchell, R, 2019, '[Mapping the landscape of education research by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa: Insights from the African Education Research Database](#)'. REAL Centre, University of Cambridge
- Mitchell, R & Rose, P, 2018, '[Literature search protocol for the African Education Research Database](#)'.
- Asare, S, Mitchell, R & Rose, P, 2018, '[Global policy agendas and the Education Sustainable Development Goal: Perspectives from sub-Saharan African research and researchers](#)'.
- Mitchell, R, Rose, P & Asare, S, 2018, '[Research in African universities to inform the Sustainable Development Goal for Education: visibility, gaps and future priorities](#)'.
- Mitchell, R, 2018, '[Mapping the African research evidence base for educational policy and practice](#)'.

[View complete publications list](#) in the University of Bristol publications system

## Courses

Dr Mitchell currently teaches 6 courses: